

APPENDIX B

COMPETENCY GOALS AND INDICATORS FOR HEAD START STAFF WORKING WITH FAMILIES

The "Competency Goals and Indicators for Head Start Staff Working with Families" described on the following pages are intended to define competencies and skills for entry-level staff who are working directly with families under ongoing supervision in furtherance of their professional development. Family Workers should be able to demonstrate their ability to provide services consistent with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Today's workers are expected to exhibit a new level of professionalism to effectively support today's families. Increasingly, new organizational structures and innovative service models within Head Start require workers to:

- Develop respectful relationships with families which evolve into an individualized family partnering process which addresses the parent's role in supporting child development goals, health and disabilities goals, as well as traditional social services, family development, and parent involvement goals.
- Work in partnership with families and other community providers to develop family partnership agreements and to integrate this process into family plans when appropriate.
- Support families in their efforts to obtain employment and move towards self-sufficiency
- Provide a new level of service in the area of family literacy, reflective of the intent of the current Head Start Program Performance Standards.

APPENDIX B as follows:

- Reflects the Head Start Program Performance Standards
- Reflects the latest thinking in the family support field including strength-based, family centered principles, and
- Includes new areas of competency in response to the changing role of family support staff

Indicators are listed for each area of competency. These Indicators provide a mechanism to measure individuals seeking demonstrable competency in each of the competency goal areas.

COMPETENCY GOALS AND INDICATORS FOR HEAD START STAFF WORKING WITH FAMILIES

Competency Goal #1: **Establish mutually respectful partnerships with families to enhance the quality of their lives and their communities.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Conduct outreach, recruitment, and enrollment;
- Provide orientation on philosophy of program and services provided;
- Establish and maintain ongoing partnerships based on trust with families;
- Communicate effectively using appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages and reflective listening skills;
- Implement strategies including home visits to learn about families and the changing community.

Competency Goal #2: **Support families' efforts to reach their goals.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Develop strengths-based assessments with families that describe their goals, strengths, resources and support networks, as well as necessary services and supports;
- Develop, in partnership with the family, an individualized family plan;
- Facilitate families' problem-solving and teach problem-solving skills;
- Coach, consult, educate, and utilize counseling skills, where appropriate;
- Advocate for the family and support them in advocating for themselves;
- Follow-up with the family on the progress toward meeting their goals and any needed revisions to the plan;
- Assist with transitions to other programs, communities and schools.

Competency Goal #3: **Offer parents opportunities to be involved in group activities, including policy groups and educational activities based on interest and need.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Identify common interests and needs of parents in order to plan appropriate activities;
- Work with parent groups on group formation, group processing, and leadership,
- Provide and/or coordinate training and educational opportunities for parents; and
- Engage parents in volunteering, community service and other ways of contributing to program activities and services.

Competency Goal #4: **Provide opportunities for children and families to participate in family literacy services.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Work with other program staff to support interactive literacy activities between parents and their children;
- Provide training for parents in how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children;
- Assist parents as adult learners to recognize and address their own literacy goals; and
- Link and support parents in engaging in literacy training that contributes to self-sufficiency.

Competency Goal #5: **Coordinate and integrate Head Start services in order to enhance effectiveness.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Serve as a productive team member on an interdisciplinary team of professionals;
- Participate in and facilitate case conferences to promote service integration;
- Apply knowledge of health, mental health, disabilities, and child development in order to ensure holistic service delivery;
- Promote and support parent involvement and leadership throughout the program.

Competency Goal #6: **Support families in accessing other community resources.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Research and keep up-to-date on program and community resources;
- Analyze match of community resources to family needs and identify unmet family needs.
- Refer families to community resources and follow-up on the effectiveness of referrals; and
- Promote community partnerships that will improve supports to families.

Competency Goal #7: **Assist families in crisis.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Listen to families and assess the crisis situation;
- Take active steps to ensure the safety of all involved;
- Decide when to intervene and when to refer a family;
- Identify (with the family) options, resources, and consequences to address the crisis; and
- Support families in making decisions and taking active steps to resolve current crises and be prepared to address future crises;

Competency Goal #8: **Respect and respond competently to the culture, traditions, lifestyle, language, and values of each family and community.**

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Be knowledgeable about and sensitive to each family's values, beliefs, traditions, cultural influences, makeup, and circumstances;
- Work with families representing different cultures using a culturally competent and flexible approach.
- Identify and reflect on personal values, experiences and biases that facilitate and present barriers in working with certain groups of people.

Competency Goal #9

Contribute to effective program practices and maintain a commitment to professionalism.

Indicators: *Head Start staff working with families should demonstrate their ability to do the following:*

- Perform record-keeping and internal and external reporting tasks in a timely and objective fashion;
- Effectively utilize supervisory professional development and technical assistance resources to improve competence;
- Contribute to and participate in strategic planning, program self-assessment and other efforts to improve program services and agency responsiveness to families;
- Make decisions and act based on family support principles, theories, practices, and code of ethics;
- Articulate an awareness of self, values, and ethics as they impact on work with families; and
- Maintain professional boundaries and confidentiality.

